



*National Department of Agriculture  
Institute of Natural Resources (an Associate of  
the University of Natal)*



## **Growing guavas**

Guavas are high in vitamin C. The trees give good shade because they do not lose their leaves in winter. They give fruit 2 years after planting if they are given enough water.

### **Where do guavas grow best?**

- Guavas grow best in hot areas which do not get frost.
- They can, however, grow in most places where the winters are not too cold.
- If they are planted where there is a little frost, the young trees must be covered.

The trees should be planted in a place where they are protected from cold winds.



### **Kinds of fruits and trees (cultivars)**

- Fan Retief: the fruit is pink inside.
- White guava: the fruit is white inside.
- Cherry or Chinese guava: this variety grows into a small bush. It can grow in areas with some frost. You can even plant it in a barrel or drum.

### **Soil requirements**

Although guavas grow well in any kind of soil, they prefer well-drained soil (water does not remain in the soil for a long time after rain).



### **Planting date**

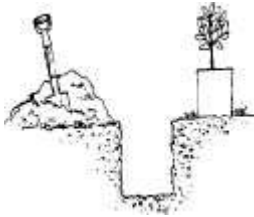
Guavas can be planted at any time of the year, but the warmer months are better.

### **Spacing**

Plant them 2 to 3 metres from other trees and 5 metres from other guava trees.

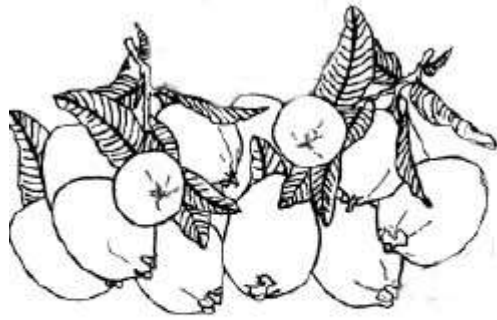
### **Planting**

- Dig a hole about twice the size of the bag in which the young tree is growing.
- Remove the soil from the hole and add some compost and manure. Mix this with some of the soil that has been dug out.
- Take the plant out of the plastic bag by cutting the bag open at the side.
- Do not disturb the roots.
- Place the tree in the centre of the hole. When you fill the hole, hold the tree so that its base is level with the surrounding ground.
- Raise the soil around the tree to dam the water (rain or irrigation).






### **Water**

- • Water the trees every 2 to 3 weeks in the dry season.
- • Apply a mulch (grass or leaves) round the tree to keep the soil moist and prevent it from drying out. A mulch helps to save water.





### Fertilisation

- *Compost or manure*

<b>Year 1</b>	In October (after pruning) and in April give the tree $\frac{1}{2}$ bucketful. If using chicken manure a $\frac{1}{4}$ bucketful would be sufficient. Spread evenly round the trunk, not against the trunk.	 $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$
<b>Year 2 to 6</b>	Each October and April add $\frac{1}{2}$ bucketful. After 6 years you will be giving it 3 bucketfuls in October and 3 in April.	
<b>Year 6 onwards</b>	Each October and April give the tree 3 bucketfuls. Remember, if using chicken manure, give only $1\frac{1}{2}$ bucketsful.	

- *Artificial fertilisers*

<b>Year 1</b>	In October (after pruning) and April give the tree $\frac{1}{2}$ tinful (250 g) of 3:1:5.	
<b>Year 2</b>	In October and April give the tree 1 tinful (500 g) of 3:1:5.	
<b>Year 3 to 6</b>	Each October and April give an extra 50 g of 3:1:5. At the end of year 6 you will be giving the tree 2 kg of 3:1:5 in October and April. Keep the soil under the tree mulched with compost all the time.	


### Pruning

- In October, after all the fruit has been picked you should prune the tree.
- Trim the tree to get a cup shape.
- Cut out the dead wood every year.
- Remove some of the branches at the tip of bigger branches so that there are 6 buds left from the base.
- Thin out crossing branches.



## Thinning

Remove some of the flowers.

	<p>For further information contact the ARC-Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Crops, Private Bag X11208, Nelspruit 1200 tel (013) 753 2071 or the Institute of Natural Resources, Private Bag X01, Scottsville 3209 tel (0331) 46 0796</p>
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